

College Preparation Checklist

11th Grade

All Year

- ❑ Continue to save money for college.
- ❑ Continue to challenge yourself academically. Most colleges require 4 years of English, at least 3 years of social studies (history, civics, geography, economics, etc.), 3 years of mathematics, and 3 years of science, and many require 2 years of a foreign language. Round out your course load with classes in computer science and the arts.
- ❑ Stay involved in school- or community-based extracurricular activities that interest you or enable you to explore career interests. Consider working or volunteering. *Remember: it's quality (not quantity) that counts.*
- ❑ Update your portfolio. (A portfolio might include awards, game tapes, newspaper clippings, artwork, etc.)
- ❑ Talk to people you know who went to college to learn about what to expect.
- ❑ Research colleges that interest you. Visit them and talk to students. Make lists to help you compare different colleges. Think about things like location, size, special programs and college costs.
- ❑ Go to college fairs and presentations by college representatives.
- ❑ Investigate financial aid, including scholarships. Understand the different types of aid and sources for aid. Check your school's scholarship postings, colleges' financial aid Web pages and your library for directories of special scholarships.
- ❑ For more information about scholarships and federal student aid opportunities, visit www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov.

Fall

- ❑ Take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).^{*} Even if you took it for practice last year, you must take the test in 11th grade to qualify for scholarships and programs associated with the National Merit Program.

- ❑ Write to your U.S. Senator or Representative if you would like to attend a U.S. military academy.
- ❑ See your school counselor if you are interested in participating in an ROTC program.

Spring

- ❑ Register for and take exams for college admission.^{*} Many colleges accept the SAT I and/or SAT II: Subject Test, while others accept the ACT. Check with colleges you are interested in to see what tests they require.
- ❑ Make sure you file with the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Clearinghouse if you want to play for a Division I or II team. When registering for and taking the SAT or ACT, enter "9999" as one of the college choices to have test scores sent to the Clearinghouse.

Summer Before 12th Grade

- ❑ Narrow down the list of colleges you are interested in attending. If you can, visit schools that interest you.
- ❑ Contact colleges to request information and applications for admission. Ask about financial aid, admission requirements and deadlines.
- ❑ Decide whether you are going to apply under a particular college's early decision or early action program. Be sure to learn about the program deadlines and requirements.
- ❑ Begin preparing for the application process: draft application essays; collect writing samples; assemble portfolios or audition tapes.
- ❑ If you are an athlete and plan to play in college, contact the coaches at the schools to which you are applying and ask about intercollegiate and intramural sports programs and athletic scholarships.

^{*}Remember: Register for all tests in advance and be sure to give yourself time to prepare appropriately. If you have difficulty paying a registration fee, see your school counselor about getting a fee waiver.



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